

June 2006

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Institute for Research on Poverty, February 2006

<http://www.irp.wisc.edu/publications/dps/pdfs/dp131406.pdf>

“In this paper we review the research evidence on the effects of affirmative action in employment, university admissions, and government procurement. We consider effects on both *equity* (or distribution) as well as *efficiency*. Overall, we find that affirmative action does redistribute jobs, university admissions, and government contracts away from white males toward minorities and females, though the overall magnitudes of these shifts are relatively modest. We also find that affirmative action shifts jobs and university admissions to minorities who have weaker credentials, but there is little solid evidence to date of weaker labor market performance among its beneficiaries. While those students admitted to universities under affirmative action have weaker grades and higher dropout rates than their white counterparts at selective schools, they seem to benefit overall in terms of higher graduation rates and later salaries. Affirmative action also generates positive externalities for minority and low-income communities (in terms of better medical services and labor market contacts), and perhaps for employers and universities as well. More research on a variety of these issues is also clearly needed.”

THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE UNITED STATES

Congressional Research Service, May 5, 2006

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32701.pdf>

The United States, the third most populous country globally, accounts for about 4.6% of the world's population. Within the next few years, the U.S. population — currently estimated at 299 million persons — is expected to reach twice its 1950 level of 152 million. More than just being double in size, the population has become qualitatively different from what it was in 1950. As noted by the Population Reference Bureau, “The U.S. is getting bigger, older, and more diverse.” The objective of this report is to highlight some of the demographic changes that have already occurred since 1950 and to illustrate how these and future trends will reshape the nation in the decades to come (through 2050).

CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS: FACT AND FIGURES

The Urban Institute, May 2006

http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/900955_children_of_immigrants.pdf

Congress is debating whether or not to legalize more than 11 million unauthorized immigrants, as well as stricter border and workplace enforcement. Mostly left out of this debate are the more than 5 million children living in unauthorized families, who, like their parents, would be greatly affected by the outcome of this debate.

THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION, 2006

U.S. Department of Education, June 2006

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/2006071.pdf>

This report is a statistical overview of the state of education in the U.S. from kindergarten to postsecondary education.

GIVING: U.S. PHILANTHROPY

U.S Department of State, International Information Programs, May 2006

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itsv/0506/ijse/ijse0506.htm>

This journal highlights several forms of giving and the activities of a wide variety of philanthropic organizations, some under the patronage of the rich and famous, others created and operated by ordinary people. It also contains valuable resources for those who want to learn about nonprofit management, grant writing, and other topics related to modern philanthropy.

THE NATION'S EVOLVING ELECTION SYSTEM AS REFLECTED IN THE NOVEMBER 2004 GENERAL ELECTION

U.S Government Accountability Office, June 2006

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d06450.pdf>

The 2004 general election was the first presidential election that tested substantial changes states made to their election systems since the 2000 election, including some changes required by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). HAVA required some major changes in the nation's elections processes, not all of which had to be implemented by the November 2004 election. HAVA addressed issues of people, processes, and technology, all of which must be effectively integrated to ensure effective election operations.

NON-IMMIGRANT OVERSTAYS: BRIEF SYNTHESIS OF THE ISSUE

Congressional Research Service, May 22, 2006

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/67831.pdf>

As the 109th Congress debates immigration control (i.e., border security and interior enforcement) and legal reform (i.e., temporary and permanent admissions), concerns arise over the capacity of the Department of Homeland Security to identify and remove temporary aliens who fail to depart when their visas expire. It is estimated that each year hundreds of thousands of foreign nationals overstay their nonimmigrant visas or enter the country illegally (with fraudulent documents or bypassing immigration inspections). The most recent published estimate based upon the March Supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS) is that 11.1 million unauthorized aliens were residing in the United States in 2005. Reliable estimates of the number of nonimmigrant overstays are not available, and sample estimates range from 31% to 57% of the unauthorized population (depending on methodology). This report will be updated.

THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET IN THE UNITED STATES

Information Resource Center, American Embassy Paris, June 2006

<http://www.amb-usa.fr/irc/snapshots/safetynet.pdf>

Early settlers in what is now the United States emphasized self-reliance and a strong work ethic. Given this history, it is no surprise that American culture and the system of government emphasize individual responsibility, while providing help in many forms to individuals and families who are temporarily or permanently in need. The U.S. federal government funds health care and pension programs for the retired, and provides compensation to the unemployed, support to the disabled, and a wide-ranging public assistance program for the poor. In recent years, these federal assistance programs have accounted for approximately one-half of the entire U.S. federal budget of over \$2,000 billion. The private sector in the United States also plays a large role in public assistance.